



March 22, 2022

Committee on Environment  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200  
Hartford, CT 06106  
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Re: **VETERINARY SUPPORT** for SB 235, *An Act Concerning Veterinary Reporting of Dogs Used in Animal Fighting*

Dear Co-Chair Cohen, Co-Chair Gresko, Vice Chair Slap, Vice Chair Palm, Ranking Member Miner, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA), a national veterinary organization with a focus on the health and welfare of all animals, I am writing in strong support of SB 235, legislation which would require Connecticut veterinarians to report to local law enforcement when they treat dogs they believe to have been used in animal fighting. The bill also grants veterinarians immunity from civil liability for such reporting.

Animal fighting is an extreme example of animal cruelty. Dogs used in this bloodsport frequently die of blood loss, shock, dehydration, exhaustion, infection, or other injuries, hours to days afterwards. Furthermore, preparing dogs to fight often incorporates abusive training techniques and can cause additional severe injuries. Dogfighting transforms violence into a form of entertainment, and it is often combined with other illegal activities such as high-stakes gambling. If SB 235 is enacted, it could assist law enforcement officers by identifying evidence of these cruel and corrupt operations in a proactive manner, and ultimately save the lives of many dogs.

We urge you and your colleagues in the Connecticut legislature to demonstrate your humane leadership by supporting passage of SB 235.

Sincerely,

Melissa Shapiro, DVM  
HSVMA Connecticut State Representative